



A Statistical Profile of Older Americans

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, there were 43.1 million Americans aged 65 and over and 5.9 million aged 85 and over. Over the next 50 years, the number of people aged 65 and older is expected to more than double to 92 million and the number of people aged 85 and older is expected to triple to 18 million. Among the population age 65 and over, there are 129 women for every 100 men. At age 85 and over this ratio increases to 200 women for every 100 men.

In 2012, there were 76.4 million baby boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) accounting for one-quarter of the population. Baby boomers began turning 65 years old in 2011.

CENTENARIANS

Between 1980 and 2012, the centenarian population increased 93 percent from 32,194 in 1980 to 61,985 in 2012.

RESIDENCE

In 2012, the states that had the largest number of people age 65 and over were California (4.6 million), Florida (3.5 million), Texas (2.8 million), New York (2.8 million), and Pennsylvania (2.0 million). However, the states with the largest percentage of older Americans were Florida (18.2 percent), Maine (17.0 percent), West Virginia (16.8 percent), Pennsylvania (16.0 percent), Montana (15.7 percent) and Vermont (15.7 percent).

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The past decade has seen a significant increase in educational attainment among older Americans. In 2013, 83 percent of the population aged 65 and older had finished high school and 25 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. In 1965, only 24 percent of older Americans were high school graduates and 5 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Nonetheless, there are still educational differences among racial and ethnic groups. In 2013, only 51 percent of older Hispanics were high school graduates and 10 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

In 2013, 71 percent of older men lived with their spouses, 8 percent lived with other relatives, 2 percent lived with non-relatives, and 19 percent lived alone. For older women, 45 percent lived with their spouses, 19 percent lived with other relatives, 1 percent lived with non-relatives, and 35 percent lived alone. The percentage of older women living alone (35 percent) is almost twice that of older men (19 percent) living alone.

INCOME AND POVERTY

Households containing families headed by persons age 65 and over reported a median income in 2012 of \$48,957. The median personal income for older men was \$27,612 and for older women it was \$16,040. Over the past half century, the poverty rate for older Americans decreased dramatically from 35 percent in 1959 to 9.1 percent in 2012.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Between 1990 and 2013, the labor force participation rate of people age 65 and over increased from 12 percent to 19 percent. According to U.S. Census Bureau projections, the number of people age 65 and over in the labor force will increase by 67 percent between 2015 and 2040.

SELF-RATED HEALTH STATUS

During 2010-2012, 76 percent of older men and older women reported good, very good, or excellent health status. Positive health evaluations decline with age. Among men ages 65-74, 79 percent reported good, very good, or excellent health, compared with 67 percent among those aged 85 or older. Similarly, among women, this rate declined from 80 percent at ages 65-74 to 68 percent at age 85 or older.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Most older persons have at least one chronic condition and many have multiple conditions. Some of the most frequently occurring conditions among older Americans in 2010-2012 were: diagnosed arthritis (50 percent), cancer (24 percent), all types of heart disease (30 percent), diagnosed diabetes (20 percent in 2007-2010), and hypertension (72 percent in 2007-2010).

ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE

In 2012, 50 percent of all older adults had both Medicare and supplementary private health insurance and 8 percent were covered by both Medicare and Medicaid. In 2010-2012, 4 percent of older Americans reported they had no usual source of health care.

PARTICIPATION IN OLDER AMERICAN ACT (OAA) PROGRAMS

In 2011, State and Area Agencies on Aging provided services to a total of 11 million persons aged 60 and older. Consistent with the targeting requirements of the OAA, state and area agencies on aging placed considerable emphasis on services to persons with the greatest social and economic need, including members of racial and ethnic minority groups, especially those who are poor. Among the older persons who received Title III OAA home and community-based registered services, 61 percent were white, non-Hispanic; 11 percent were African American; 3 percent were Asian; 1 percent were American Indian and Alaska Native; and 7 percent were Hispanic.

For more information about ACL

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